

PRINCE DORUS

BY

CHARLES LAMB

WITH ALL THE COLOURED PICTURES.

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1782

PRINCE DORUS

BY

Charles Lamb

WITH NINE COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS

IN FACSIMILE

INTRODUCTION BY

ANDREW W. TIER, F.S.A.



1890-1.

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CHILDREN'S ROOM
& REFERENCE

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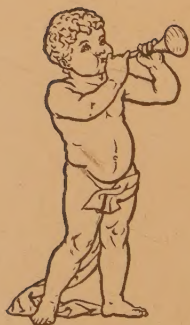


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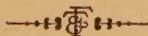


*The type and illustrations of "Prince
Dorus" follow the original edition of
1811.*





INTRODUCTION.



IN one of the thirty-five closely written original volumes of Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary, under date May 15th, 1811, is this note: "A very pleasant call on Charles and Mary Lamb. Read his version of the story of Prince Dorus, the Long-Nosed King." And there is a footnote as follows: "This is not in his collected works, and, as well as two volumes of Poems for children, is likely to be lost.—H.C.R."

"This year" (1811) says Robinson, "I began to keep a Diary." The first entry in the diary is dated

dated January 8th. Robinson's editor, Thomas Sadler, says in his preface :* "From the year 1811, the Diary is entitled to the most prominent place. The Reminiscences were not begun till Mr. Robinson had nearly reached three score years and ten; and even if they had been written in the freshness of his memory and in the fulness of his mental vigour, they would still hardly have had equal value with the daily record, which breathes the air of the scenes and incidents to which it relates."

Charles Lamb understood children and their ways, and he knew how "to fascinate with the highest art in its simplest form." He understood the difference between children's books and
childish

* Diary, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, Barrister-at-Law, F.S.A. Selected and Edited by Thomas Sadler, Ph. D. In three vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1869.



childish books, and one cannot wonder that books wherein can be traced his delicate humour and subtle wit are as much prized now as they were by those who have long since turned to dust.

His humorous and charmingly illustrated "Prince Dorus"—published at a shilling; coloured, sixpence extra—is so scarce that the number of copies of the first edition (1811) is limited probably to a couple or three, in fact I can vouch for only one perfect copy—that in my own collection.

A "Prince Dorus" amongst Mr. Mackenzie's books sold at Sotheby's in March last year (1889) was knocked down to a leading London bookseller for £45. It was purchased deliberately with a view to resale at a profit. Curious to learn whether there were any differences between Mr. Mackenzie's copy and my own, I examined
 them

them together, and after glancing at the title page I said, "This is not the 'Prince Dorus' you bought at the Mackenzie sale? you are shewing me a copy of the second edition published in 1818: your little book should be dated 1811." However, it *was* the copy for which this large sum had been paid, and its value I appraised at a sovereign or less.

Years ago I was not alone in fully describing the first edition of this rare little book, and although collectors probably thought it worth their while to make a note of the chief points, dealers, whose bread and butter partly depend upon being posted up in trivialities of this kind, seem to have neglected doing so.

On the outside (unlettered) stiff paper cover of the first edition of "Prince Dorus" is a wood-cut

cut (herein reproduced in facsimile) of the Long-Nosed King and Aged Fairy, and the back cover is entirely without advertisements of which the second edition has a goodly number. The second edition is also without the wood-cut, the title page being repeated on the cover with some variations which it would perhaps be a waste of space to here point out. How many copies of "Prince Dorus" were printed in all it is impossible to say, but from a comparison of the nine illustrations in the first and second editions one may judge it was a successful book, for in the latter the flesh tints have mostly disappeared from the wearing away of the copper-plates.

The fact that, besides being well read, a child's favourite book is apt to be badly used and literally thumbed out of existence, hardly accounts for the
almost

almost complete disappearance of Lamb's "Prince Dorus," or of "Poetry for Children" (1809) in two small volumes "By the Author of Mrs. Leicester's School," the joint production of Charles and his sister Mary. Two original copies only—one imperfect—are known of the "Poetry," which disappeared so completely that for some years there were doubts as to whether it had ever existed. "Poetry for Children" was republished by a Boston (U.S.A.) bookseller in 1812, though at the time escaping notice over here, and one or two copies of the American edition have since turned up.

Lamb's "Beauty and the Beast,"* published in 1811 at 3s. 6*d.* plain, 5s. 6*d.* coloured, also disappeared

* "Beauty and the Beast," with the pretty plates engraved in facsimile, and an introduction by Andrew Lang, has recently been republished at The Leadenhall Press.

appeared so completely that but three or four copies are known. One of these has fallen to an opulent American who, it is said, disbursed £50 for it.

While not so scarce, some other little books from the same source, including "The Adventures of Ulysses," designed, we learn from the preface, "as a supplement to the Adventures of Telemachus," are amongst the quests of the collector. The cleverly transposed and interestingly told "Tales from Shakespeare designed for the use of Young Persons," by Charles Lamb (1807), in two volumes, with copper-plates engraved by Blake from Mulready's designs, ran into several editions; and "Mrs. Leicester's School, or the History of Several Young Ladies related by Themselves," published anonymously—but written by Charles
and

and his sister Mary—in 1808, was even still more popular.

Charles Lamb's books for children can sometimes be obtained by others than the deep-pocketed. I know of a London second-hand bookseller in whose catalogue one of these rareties was offered not so long ago for 7*s.* 6*d.* It escaped the notice of his customers and was bought by a rival who sold it for £30.

In the twopenny dip box outside a book shop in the Waterloo Road, a fortunate individual unearthed another for which the British Museum paid him much gold.

And the story may just be mentioned of the person who—unavailingly it may be remembered—tried to beat down the price of a bargain. He departed, but when the pleasantly troublesome
itching

itching of the *cacoëthes carpendi* drove him back to buy, the somebody who under such circumstances always intrudes had been there.

Should the gentle reader some day in knocking about be fortunate enough to stumble upon a little child's book by "the gentle Elia," which may become his for a few coppers or an odd shilling or two, he may recall the story of the Parsimonious Person and the Inevitable Somebody, and joyously discount the envy of the less fortunate at the crisp paragraph announcing in a breath his discovery and astuteness.

But whether advantage can legitimately be taken of another's ignorance is one of those uncomfortable questions best left alone. Until the wearisomely-long-in-coming time of trial arrives, it is idle to guess what may happen.



SINCE the foregoing introduction was put into type and worked off, I have discovered that the copy of Prince Dorus—originally in the Flaxman collection—referred to therein, is probably a unique trial proof. It differs from the first edition issued to the public, in which the woodcut of the Long-Nosed King and Aged Fairy is relegated to the back cover, and in its place the title page, slightly curtailed and date omitted, is repeated within a key border.

A. W. T.

The Little-ones' Introduction.



THIS is a little book about a Fairy ;
and if you think fairies are
dead and done let me tell you a little
story about this little book.

I have told the story before,
but I dare say you skipped it.

Well, a copy of " Prince
Dorus " was sold not long
ago for forty-five pounds to a bookseller who
meant to sell it again for as large a sum and a
little

little over just to buy a slice of bread-and-butter. This copy bore the date of 1818, but the year in which "Prince Dorus" was first printed was 1811. Now the copy you have in your hands is just like the very first copy that was printed. Every word is the very same and every picture too. But instead of its costing you nine-hundred shillings, it costs you only one. And is not this a fairy tale?

Charles Lamb, who was called "the frolic and gentle," had no children of his own. I never heard that he had even any nephews or nieces. So, though he loved little people dearly, he did not know quite in what way they talk. When he wants to say that the Prince fell in love with the Princess, he says :

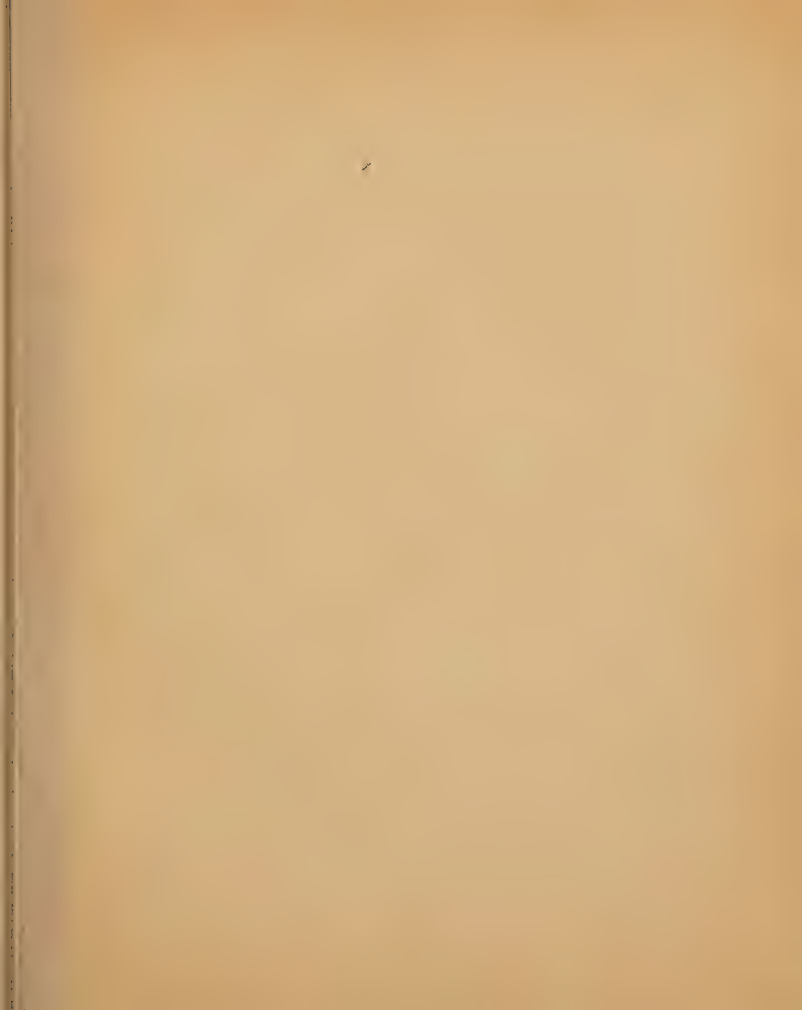
" That love whose power e'en princes have confest,
Claim'd the soft empire o'er his youthful breast "

And so on. Now this is what is called writing on stilts.

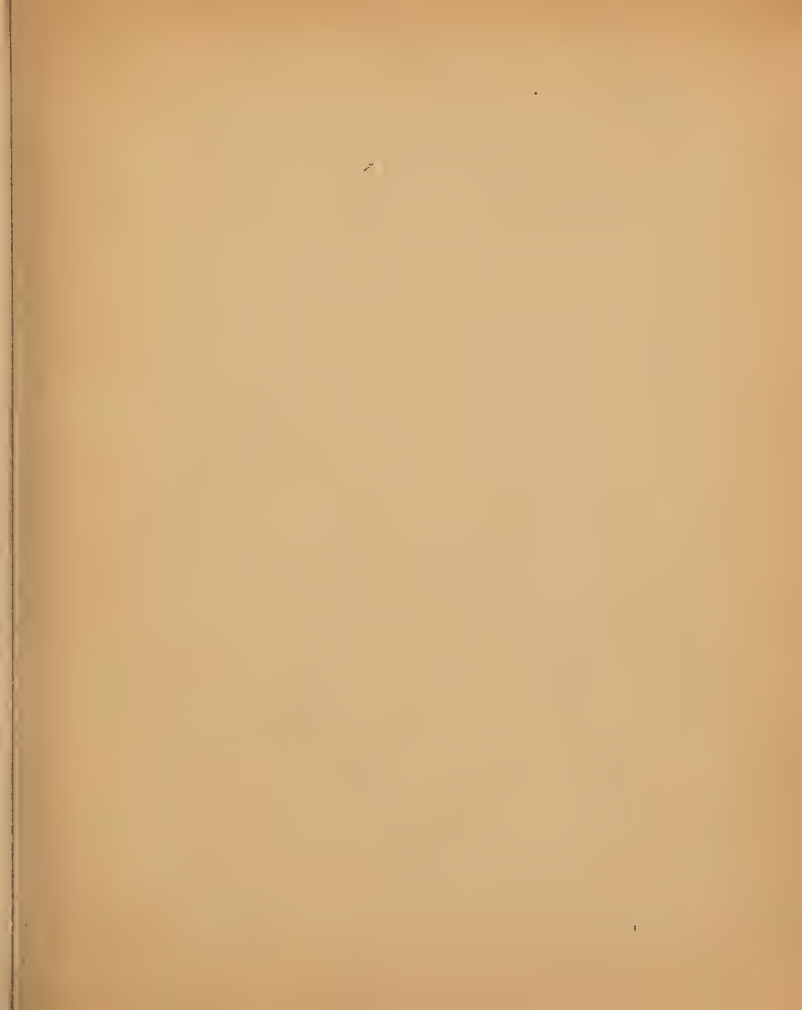
stilts. It is a favourite game with children to walk on real wooden stilts ; and it will be a new kind of game to read " Prince Dorus " as it was written by Charles Lamb, and then to step down into common words such as children use. And the pictures will help every child to understand and to make the interpretation aright.







there
are some
Large Paper Copies
very prettily bound
the plates coloured by hand
each
separately numbered
and signed
at
7/6





The Enchanted Cat.

PRINCE DORUS:

OR,

FLATTERY PUT OUT OF COUNTENANCE.

A POETICAL VERSION OF AN ANCIENT TALE.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A SERIES OF ELEGANT ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR M. J. GODWIN,

AT THE JUVENILE LIBRARY, NO. 41, SKINNER STREET;

AND TO BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS AND TOYMEN IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM

1811.

PRINCE DORUS.

IN days of yore, as Ancient Stories tell,
A King in love with a great Princess fell.
Long at her feet submit the Monarch sigh'd,
While she with stern repulse his suit denied.
Yet was he form'd by birth to please the fair,
Dre-s'd, danc'd, and courted with a Monarch's air;

But Magic Spells her frozen breast had steel'd
With stubborn pride, that knew not how to yield.

This to the King a courteous Fairy told,
And bade the Monarch in his suit be bold ;
For he that would the charming Princess wed,
Had only on her cat's black tail to tread,
When straight the Spell would vanish into air,
And he enjoy for life the yielding fair.

He thank'd the Fairy for her kind advice.—
Thought he, “ If this be all, I'll not be nice ;

Rather than in my courtship I will fail,
I will to mince-meat tread Minon's black tail."

To the Princess's court repairing strait,
He sought the cat that must decide his fate ;
But when he found her, how the creature stared !
How her back bristled, and her great eyes glared !
That, which he so fondly hop'd his prize,
Was swell'd by wrath to twice its usual size ;
And all her cattish gestures plainly spoke,
She thought the affair he came upon, no joke.

With wary step the cautious King draws near,
And slyly means to attack her in her rear ;
But when he thinks upon her tail to pounce,
Whisk—off she skips—three yards upon a bounce—
Again he tries, again his efforts fail—
Minon's a witch—the deuce is in her tail—

The anxious chase for weeks the Monarch tried,
Till courage fail'd, and hope within him died.
A desperate suit 'twas useless to prefer,
Or hope to catch a tail of quicksilver.—
When on a day, beyond his hopes, he found
Minon, his foe, asleep upon the ground ;



Minon Asleep.



The Transformation.

Her ample tail behind her lay outspread,
 Full to the eye, and tempting to the tread.
 The King with rapture the occasion bless'd,
 And with quick foot the fatal part he press'd.
 Loud squalls were heard, like howlings of a storm,
 And sad he gazed on Minon's altered form,—
 No more a cat, but chang'd into a man
 Of giant size, who frown'd, and thus began:

“Rash King, that dared with impious design
 To violate that tail, that once was mine;
 What though the spell be broke, and burst the charms,
 That kept the Princess from thy longing arms,—

Not unrevenge'd shalt thou my fury dare,
 For by that violated tail I swear,
 From your unhappy nuptials shall be born
 A Prince, whose Nose shall be thy subjects' scorn.
 Bless'd in his love thy son shall never be,
 Till he his foul deformity shall see,
 Till he with tears his blemish shall confess,
 Discern its odious length, and wish it less ! "

This said, he vanish'd ; and the King awhile
 Mused at his words, then answer'd with a smile,
 " Give me a child in happy wedlock born,
 And let his Nose be made like a French horn ;

His knowledge of the fact I ne'er can doubt,—
If he have eyes, or hands, he'll find it out."

So spake the King, self-flatter'd in his thought,
Then with impatient step the Princess sought
His urgent suit no longer she withstands,
But links with him in Hymen's knot her hands.

Almost as soon a widow as a bride,
Within a year the King her husband died ;
And shortly after he was dead and gone,
She was deliver'd of a little son,

The prettiest babe, with lips as red as rose,
And eyes like little stars—but such a nose—
The tender Mother fondly took the boy
Into her arms, and would have kiss'd her joy ;
His luckless nose forbade the fond embrace—
He thrust the hideous feature in her face.

Then all her Maids of Honour tried in turn,
And for a Prince's kiss in envy burn ;
By sad experience taught, their hopes they miss'd,
And mourn'd a Prince that never could be kiss'd.



Prince Dorus and his Maids.

In silent tears the Queen confess'd her grief,
Till kindest Flattery came to her relief.
Her maids, as each one takes him in her arms,
Expatriate freely o'er his world of charms—
His eyes, lips, mouth—his forehead was divine—
And for his nose—they call'd it Aquiline—
Declared that Cæsar, who the world subdued,
Had such a one—just of that longitude—
That Kings like him compelled folks to adore them,
And drove the short-nos'd sons of men before them—
That length of nose portended length of days,
And was a great advantage many ways—

To mourn the gifts of Providence was wrong—
Besides, *the Nose was not so very long.*—

These arguments in part her grief redrest,
A mother's partial fondness did the rest;
And Time, that all things reconciles by use,
Did in her notions such a change produce,
That, as she views her babe, with favour blind,
She thinks him handsomest of human kind.

Meantime in spite of his disfigured face,
Dorus (for so he's call'd) grew up apace;

In fair proportion all his features rose,
 Save that most prominent of all—his Nose.
 That Nose, which in the infant could annoy,
 Was grown a perfect nuisance in the boy.
 Whene'er he walk'd, his Handle went before,
 Long as the snout of Ferret, or Wild Boar ;
 Or like the Staff, with which on holy day
 The solemn Parish Beadle clears the way.

But from their cradle to their latest year,
 How seldom Truth can reach a Prince's ear !
 To keep th' unwelcome knowledge out of view,
 His lesson well each flattering Courtier knew ;

The hoary Tutor, and the wily Page,
 Unmeet confederates ! dupe his tender age.
 They taught him that whate'er vain mortals boast—
 Strength, Courage, Wisdom—all they value most—
 Whate'er on human life distinction throws—
 Was all comprised—in what ?—a length of nose !
 Ev'n Virtue's self (by some suppos'd chief merit)
 In short-nosed folks was only want of spirit.

While doctrines such as these his guides instill'd,
 His Palace was with long-nosed people fill'd ;
 At Court whoever ventured to appear
 With a short nose, was treated with a sneer.

Each courtier's wife, that with a babe is blest,
Moulds its young nose betimes ; and does her best,
By pulls, and hauls, and twists, and lugs and pinches
To stretch it to the standard of the Prince's.

Dup'd by these arts, Dorus to manhood rose,
Nor dream'd of ought more comely than his Nose
Till Love, whose pow'r ev'n Princes have confest,
Claim'd the soft empire o'er his youthful breast.
Fair Claribel was she who caused his care ;
A neighb'ring Monarch's daughter, and sole heir.
For beauteous Claribel his bosom burn'd ;
The beauteous Claribel his flame return'd ;

Deign'd with kind words his passion to approve,
Met his soft vows, and yielded love for love.
If in her mind some female pangs arose
At sight (and who can blame her?) of his Nose,
Affection made her willing to be blind ;
She loved him for the beauties of his mind ;
And in his lustre, and his royal race,
Contented sunk—one feature of his face.

Blooming to sight, and lovely to behold,
Herself was cast in Beauty's richest mould ;
Sweet female majesty her person deck'd—
Her face an angel's—save for one defect—

Wise Nature, who to Dorus over kind,
A length of nose too liberal had assign'd,
As if with us poor mortals to make sport,
Had giv'n to Claribel a nose too short :
But turned up with a sort of modest grace ;
It took not much of beauty from her face ;
And subtle Courtiers, who their Prince's mind
Still watch'd, and turned about with every wind,
Assur'd the Prince, that though man's beauty owes
Its charms to a majestic length of nose,
The excellence of Woman (softer creature)
Consisted in the shortness of that feature.

Few arguments were wanted to convince
The already more than half persuaded Prince ;
Truths, which we hate, with slowness we receive,
But what we wish to credit, soon believe.

The Princess's affections being gain'd,
What but her Sire's approval now remain'd ?
Ambassadors with solemn pomp are sent
To win the aged Monarch to consent
(Seeing their States already were allied)
That Dorus might have Claribel to bride.
Her Royal Sire, who wisely understood
The match propos'd was for both kingdoms' good,



Claribel Carried off.

Gave his consent ; and gentle Claribel
With weeping bids her Father's court farewell.

With gallant pomp, and numerous array,
Dorus went forth to meet her on her way ;
But when the Princely pair of lovers met,
Their hearts on mutual gratulations set,
Sudden the Enchanter from the ground arose,
(The same who prophesied the Prince's nose)
And with rude grasp, unconscious of her charms,
Snatch'd up the lovely Princess in his arms,
Then bore her out of reach of human eyes,
Up in the pathless regions of the skies.

Bereft of her that was his only care,
Dorus resign'd his soul to wild despair ;
Resolv'd to leave the land that gave him birth,
And seek fair Claribel throughout the earth.
Mounting his horse, he gives the beast the reins,
And wanders lonely through the desert plains ;
With fearless heart the savage heath explores,
Where the wolf prowls, and where the tiger roars,
Nor wolf, nor tiger, dare his way oppose ;
The wildest creatures see, and shun, his NOSE.
Ev'n lions fear ! the elephant alone
Surveys with pride a trunk so like his own.



Visit to the Beneficent Fairy.

At length he to a shady forest came,
Where in a cavern lived an aged dame;
A reverend Fairy, on whose silver head
A hundred years their downy snows had shed.
Here ent'ring in, the Mistress of the place
Bespoke him welcome with a cheerful grace
Fetch'd forth her dainties, spread her social board
With all the Store her dwelling could afford.
The Prince with toil and hunger sore opprest,
Gladly accepts, and deigns to be her guest.
But when the first civilities were paid,
The dishes rang'd, and Grace in order said ;

The Fairy, who had leisure now to view
Her guest more closely, from her pocket drew
Her spectacles, and wip'd them from the dust,
Then on her nose endeavour'd to adjust;
With difficulty she could find a place
To hang them on in her unshapely face ;
For if the Princess's was somewhat small,
This Fairy scarce had any nose at all.
But when by help of spectacles the Crone
Discern'd a Nose so different from her own,
What peals of laughter shook her aged sides !
While with sharp jests the Prince she thus derides.



Prince Dorus Offended.

FAIRY.

“ Welcome great Prince of Noses, to my cell ;
’Tis a poor place,—but thus we Fairies dwell.
Pray, let me ask you, if from far you come—
And don’t you sometimes find it cumbersome ? ”

PRINCE.

“ Find what ? ”

FAIRY.

“ Your Nose— ”

PRINCE.

“ My Nose, Ma’am !

FAIRY.

“ No offence—

The King your Father was a man of sense,
A handsome man (but lived not to be old)
And had a Nose cast in the common mould.
Ev'n I myself, that now with age am grey,
Was thought to have some beauty in my day,
And am the Daughter of a King. Your sire
In this poor face saw something to admire—
And I to shew my gratitude made shift—
Have stood his friend—and help'd him at a lift—
'Twas I that, when his hopes began to fail,
Shew'd him the spell that lurk'd in Minon's tail—

Perhaps you have heard—but come, Sir, you don't eat—
That Nose of yours requires both wine and meat—
Fall to, and welcome, without more ado—
You see your fare—what shall I help you to ?
This dish the tongues of nightingales contains ;
This, eyes of peacocks ; and that, linnets' brains ;
That next you is a Bird of Paradise—
We fairies in our food are somewhat nice.—
And pray, Sir, while your hunger is supplied,
Do lean your Nose a little on one side ;
The shadow, which it casts upon the meat,
Darkens my plate, I see not what I eat—”

The Prince on dainty after dainty feeding,
Felt inly shock'd at the old Fairy's breeding ;
And held it want of manners in the Dame,
And did her country education blame.
One thing he only wonder'd at,—what she
So very comic in his nose could see.
Hers, it must be confest, was somewhat short,
And time and shrinking age, accounted for't ;
But for his own, thank heaven, he could not tell
That it was ever thought remarkable ;
A decent nose, of reasonable size,
And handsome thought, rather than otherwise.
But that which most of all his wonder paid,
Was to observe the Fairy's waiting Maid ;

How at each word the aged Dame let fall ;
She courtsied low, and smil'd assent to all ;
But chiefly when the rev'rend Grannam told
Of conquests, which her beauty made of old.—
He smiled to see how Flattery sway'd the Dame,
Nor knew himself was open to the same !
He finds her raillery now increase so fast,
That making hasty end of his repast,
Glad to escape her tongue, he bids farewell
To the old Fairy, and her friendly cell.

But his kind Hostess, who had vainly tried
The force of ridicule to cure his pride,

Fertile in plans, a surer method chose,
To make him see the error of his nose;
For till he view'd that feature with remorse,
The Enchanter's direful spell must be in force.

Midway the road by which the Prince must pass,
She rais'd by magic art a House of Glass :
No mason's hand appear'd, nor work of wood ;
Compact of glass the wondrous fabric stood.
Its stately pillars, glittering in the sun,
Conspicuous from afar, like silver, shone.
Here, snatch'd and rescued from th' Enchanter's might,
She placed the beauteous Claribel in sight.



Truth Brought Home.

The admiring Prince the chrystal dome survey'd,
And sought access unto his lovely Maid ;
But, strange to tell, in all that mansion's bound,
Nor door, nor casement, was there to be found.
Enrag'd he took up massy stones, and flung
With such a force, that all the palace rung ;
But made no more impression on the glass,
Than if the solid structure had been brass.
To comfort his despair, the lovely maid
Her snowy hand against her window laid ;
But when with eager haste he thought to kiss,
His Nose stood out, and robb'd him of the bliss.

CHILDREN'S ROOM
J. REFERENCE

30
Thrice he essay'd th' impracticable feat ;
The window and his lips can never meet.

The painful Truth, which Flattery long conceal'd,
Rush'd on his mind, and " O ! " he cried, " I yield ;
Wisest of Fairies, thou wert right, I wrong—
I own, I own, I have à Nose too long."

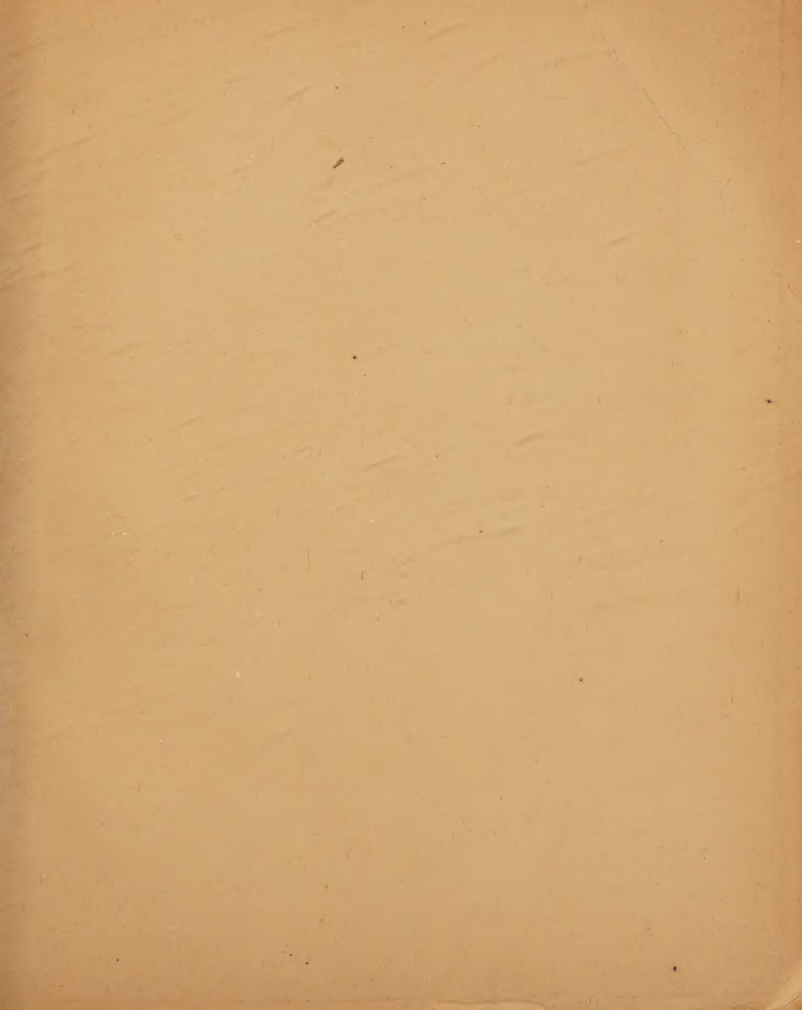
The frank confession was no sooner spoke,
But into shivers all the palace broke,
His Nose of monstrous length, to his surprise
Shrunk to the limits of a common size ;



Self-Knowledge obtains its Reward.

And Claribel with joy her Lover view'd,
Now grown as beautiful as he was good.
The aged Fairy in their presence stands,
Confirms their mutual vows, and joins their hands.
The Prince with rapture hails the happy hour,
That rescued him from self-delusion's power ;
And trains of blessings crown the future life
Of Dorus, and of Claribel, his wife.

THE END.







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